

# Carter County Commission

## Minutes of:

### Education Committee

October 04, 2021, 6:00 PM

#### Members:

Layla Ward in for Ginger Holdren

Mark Tester – present

Kelly Collins - present

Jerry Proffitt – present

Mark Blevins – present

Gary Bailey – present

Nancy Brown - present

Sonja Culler - absent

#### I. Call to Order

The Education Committee was called to order by Chairwoman Layla Ward at 6:27 pm.

**(Motion was made by Gary Bailey, second by Mark Tester during the Highway Committee Meeting to accept Layla Ward to fill in for Ginger Holdren.**

**All in favor, motion carried.)**

#### II. Roll Call

Seven (7) voting members present

#### III. Approval of Agenda

**Motion was made by Mark Tester, second by Mark Blevins to accept the agenda for tonight's meeting.**

**All in favor, motion carried.**

#### IV. Approval of Minutes from Previous Meeting

**Motion was made by Mark Blevins, second by Nancy Brown to accept the minutes from the last meeting.**

**All in favor, motion carried.**

#### V. Public Comments

None

#### VI. Election of Officers

##### a. Chairperson

Mark Tester nominated Kelly Collins, second by Mark Blevins

**Motion by Mark Blevins, second by Mark Tester to cease nomination and appoint by acclamation.**

**All in favor, motion carried.**

##### b. Vice Chairperson

Motion by Mark Blevins to nominate Sonja Culler, second by Gary Bailey.

All in favor, motion carried.

Dr. McAbee attended the meeting to give the committee an update on what has been going on with the school system. He reported that the CTE Program at the Workforce Development priority is welding, it is happening at Cloudland and at Happy Valley. We didn't get started early enough to allow for the students to graduate with a diploma and a welding diploma in May, but they will be able to get the welding diploma in August. There have been several meetings to prioritize things. The biggest waiting list at TCAT is the welding program, second is the Cosmetology Program. He met with James Monroe, and he has a certification program where he can give a 608 Air Conditioning certification that can pay about \$18 dollars an hour locally and if they want to go to the Knoxville area they can make as much as \$22 per hour right out of high school.

He reported that the test scores dropped. They expected it and they are down quite a bit. Kids were not in school last year.

Nancy Brown asked how the kids that are taking the college courses adjusting. Are there grades doing, ok? Dr. McAbee stated that there are thirty-four students taking the middle college at Northeast State and twelve doing the welding through TCAT. He has met with those teachers, the welders were having issues, but they put some tutors in place and things are on the right track. He expects to have even more in the middle college program next year than this year. There have been assurances from representatives that legislation will be in place to raise the middle college scholarship from \$1,200 to \$2,000.

Mark Blevins asked where the county system ranked in the state. Dr. McAbee stated that the ACTs didn't drop but TCAP scores were lower. They dropped more in math than anything. Ms. Collins asked if he believed that math dropped because of the push on reading. He stated that he did think that was part of the reason. He informed Mr. Blevins that he would get the ranking for him.

Discussion began with question about the pay scale. Why some new hires are making more than educators who have been with the system for years. Dr. McAbee stated that there are different levels of educators. Gary Bailey stated that there are teachers that are working for a base rate. Mr. Tester stated that from what he can see the benefit package is about 40% of the salary package. Dr. McAbee stated that by law the system is required to pay 40% of the medical insurance and Carter County System is paying over 80%. Ms. Collins stated that that is one of the reasons teachers stay in the county system is because of the benefits. The pay is not what Washington or Sullivan County.

Mr. Blevins asked how the Covid numbers were. Dr. McAbee answered that 3 weeks ago they had 181 active cases and today it was 34 students and four adults.

## **VII. Adjournment**

A motion to adjourn was made by Gary Bailey, second by Mark Blevins. All in favor, meeting adjourned at 6:51 PM.

Respectfully submitted by  
Gwen Crowe